

The World Mother



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The World Mother

During the many years in which the Theosophical teachings have been promulgated, there have been a few who have wondered why the Occult Hierarchy should apparently consist entirely of Beings using male bodies. The One Life has its feminine as well as its masculine aspect, and it is therefore as reasonable to expect that the feminine qualities should be expressed most fully through Great Beings using female bodies as it is that the masculine qualities should be expressed most fully through Great Beings using male bodies. That there are female as well as male Arhats is obvious, and we have quite certainly learned as much of the Divine Wisdom from the one as from the other. Moreover, what we have seen of them shows conclusively that the masculine and feminine qualities are blended in each of them — the men having the gentleness and mental refinement of the female, and the women the strength and mental clarity of the male. This makes it more difficult to understand why a male body should be considered more convenient than a female body for the work a Master has to do; doubtless, there are good physiological reasons for this, but the knowledge of them is certainly not easily made for the public.

That in the long upward climb towards perfection, the human being should need experiences through both male and female bodies is evident, for man, as a spark of the Divine Flame, has to learn free and pure expression for both aspects and manifest the feminine aspect through experiences gained in female bodies, and also the masculine aspect through experiences gained in male bodies. Yet it is obvious that some Egos, realising the purpose of evolution and feeling a strong call to this or that special department of the work, could, for the purposes of that work, deliberately dedicate themselves to an age-long series of incarnations in one sex only; thus, in their long climb upwards, developing the qualities of the sex chosen and learning to express them to the highest possible pitch of perfection, from the first early stages of their spiritual awakening and self-dedication up to the

stages of the Arhat and the Master. But apart from such cases as these, it seems necessary that both sides of the nature should be developed, for until man has reached the stage where he will be neither masculine nor feminine but a spiritual blend of the two, it is needful (the body being the restrictive agent to the life which it undoubtedly is) that it should be capable of being used exclusively for the purpose of developing the especial qualities of Deity of which it is an expression — the male body of the Causative aspect and the female body of the Formative.

This method of development is as needful in the case of the feminine qualities as of the masculine; for while the male body is capable of being used as a channel for the *positive-masculine-causative* aspect of the Deity, it is the female body which is best suited to express the *receptive-feminine-formative* aspect. And it is only the perfect expression of these dual aspects through Great Beings of both sexes which will bring home to struggling, unsatisfied humans a full realisation of the task that awaits them and enthuse them with the determination first to develop and then to synthesise the like attributes within themselves.

Despite the fact that a Master does not generally use a female body, there yet remains a feminine side of Nature, and it is reasonable to expect that its especial qualities should be expressed by Great Beings using female bodies. The Angelic orders, as is well known, express the qualities usually associated with both the male and female types, and although the Perfect Man is able to blend both natures in Himself and show them forth as needed, there is still the possibility of a Master being more masculine than feminine in His manner. This is clearly seen in the case of the Great Founder of the Theosophical Society, the Master Morya, whose type is distinctly masculine and who has not, it is said, so far been traced in a female incarnation in His past lives. On the other hand, there are Those who seem to show forth more of the feminine than the masculine attributes, as is the case, to a certain extent, with the Master Koot Hoomi, for though it cannot be said that He is more feminine than masculine, He does undoubtedly seem to the would-be disciple to

show forth the formative qualities of His nature more prominently than the causative.

It is, of course, obvious that the Masters of Wisdom, to Whom we aspire and to Whom we look for guidance, are able to help wherever help is needed. Yet there is still a feeling in some minds that in the case of feminine difficulties there is need of a 'Mother's understanding'. True, we all have to learn to stand alone, yet there are times in the life of a woman when she would be glad to be able to express herself as a woman to a Woman, and this possibility would seem to have been somewhat obscured in the Theosophical teachings although it has always been to the fore in Anglican and Roman Christianity.

The One Life in all is the same, but the male and female bodies through which it works cause certain modifications in its expression. It is not that the male is better than the female, or the female better than the male; yet there is a marked difference in the two types, not only in the physical bodies, but, it is said, also in the astral and lower mental, and this causes a corresponding difference in their methods of feeling and thinking, so that egos using bodies either definitely masculine or definitely feminine find it difficult to express themselves in any other manner than that characteristic of the vehicles they are temporarily using.

This fact gives rise to certain difficulties, not only in ordinary life, but also in the higher life. There are many cases known of instructions given to men which have proved helpful both on this plane and on others, both in the waking state and in the dream state; but, with certain great exceptions, there seem to have been few women in the Theosophical Society capable of understanding the great difficulties in the way of the would-be occultist incarnated in a female body. Yet the difficulties peculiar to women are not generally understood by men, and this makes more obvious the need for highly-evolved women to whom women students may go in their difficulties and in whom they will find developed the powers needed for the giving of a correct diagnosis

and of helpful, encouraging advice. That this need will be more and more filled as the 'Woman's Age' progresses, there is no doubt; meanwhile, those who seek to fill such a role in the future will find their task the easier for an immediate understanding of and response to the wonderful teaching regarding the World Mother. Such a response will not only enable them to put themselves into touch with Her, but will also give them the power to understand the work She is doing for the Race and the part they themselves may play in helping forward that work.

Although now almost unrecognised in the West, save in the Roman and Anglican Churches, this idea of a World Mother has nevertheless existed from the earliest days and found expression in practically all religions, as study shows. It was not, of course, considered that God was either male or female, either Father or Mother, in the ultimate sense; yet it was known from earliest days that His Being expressed Itself in our world as a Duality — positive-causative and receptive-formative, the latter being termed His Shakti, that through which He expressed Himself in terms of time and space. And it was this, the aspect of Himself in and from which all forms came into existence, that was called the World Mother — the term 'Mother' being ever the symbol of that from which all forms are born.

Among the ancient Hindus, this feminine aspect of the One was called Aditi. In the metaphysical sense She was the World Mother, the Virgin Substances, the Noumenon of Matter spread everywhere in Space, from which, as from a womb, all things were born. But this abstract idea later became personified in order to help those who were unable to grasp religious truths save as they were represented to them in image and symbol, and the World Mother then became known as Deva-matri, 'the Mother of the Gods'. She is said to have given birth to eight sons, with whom, after casting away the eighth, She approached the Gods; the meaning being that She prepared from Her own Substance and presented to the Gods, or Planetary Beings, the seven planets through and over which they were to rule, the eighth 'son', whom

She had cast into space, becoming the sun. Vishnu, the Cosmic Christ, the Second Aspect of the Holy Trinity, is said to have been born from her in His incarnation as The Dwarf — a very deep symbolism — and He is consequently sometimes called Aditya. Krishna, the Hindu World Teacher, is also said to have been born from Her, although Devaki was really His mother, and the meaning here is probably that She, in Her aspect as World Mother, allied Herself mystically with the mother of Krishna, giving her especial blessing because of the great work awaiting' her Son. There is here the same connection between Aditi an World Mother and Devaki mother of Krishna as there is between the Cosmic Mare, or Virgin Sea of Substance, and Mary, the mother of Jesus.¹

Each Person of the Holy Trinity is said to have Its 'feminine' Power, or Shakti, and we find that the Shakti of Shiva (as the Hindu called the Third Person of the Trinity), was called Jaganmata or 'Mother of the World', and was also known as 'The Virgin', or Kanya. Although She represents a power of Spirit rather than of Substance, She is described as having two aspects, the one terrible and fierce and the other gentle and mild, and thus as showing clearly the two opposites. Passion and Pure Love, over which She rules; for these are, of course, opposite poles of one and the same reality, the savage lust of the unevolved man ultimately becoming transmuted into the Pure Love of the Master and the Christ.

Lakshmi, the Power, or Shakti, of Vishnu, is also said to have been the Mother of the World. She is akin to the Grecian Aphrodite — the one being born from the churning of the ocean, the other from the foam of the sea; the meaning being, of course, that pure love comes to the surface of the astral element, love being produced from desire but rising above it.

In most of the religions of the world this idea of the feminine aspect of Deity has been prominent, its Representatives differing

¹ See the writer's *Amen, the Key to the Universe* (The Dharma Press).

in different ages. Isis of Egypt stands out more clearly than others, probably because more of Her story has been given to the world. Ishtar, or Mylitta, of Babylon is also well known. Aphrodite and other maternal Powers are represented in the Greek and Roman mythologies, whilst Demeter of Greece and Her Temples are still remembered by those who once served Her and who still serve her successor, Mary. The Carthaginians worshipped the Great Mother, or Heavenly Virgin, and She is said to be the same as Tanith; Lat of the Arabians was also reverenced by the Nabatheans as Mother of the Gods, as was the Virgin Mother at Petra.²

It is probable that all these names for the World Mother applied to one Representative, the Office evidently being held for long ages by one individual. It is evident that in Egypt the worship of Isis was carried to great extremes, and a perusal of the evidence in Budge's works on Egypt strongly conduces to the idea that Christian doctrines are reflections of the Divine Wisdom as it was taught in Egypt. This fact makes the story of Isis of especial interest to all who believe in the World Mother; for though the real truth regarding Her lies deeply buried beneath the story of her wanderings as an earthly woman and are more cosmic than terrestrial, She was nevertheless represented by a Great Being who had attained to the Angelic Kingdom after having reached Perfection along what may be called feminine lines.

At the end of Her earthly pilgrimage, this Great Being became one with Her Cosmic Lord, Osiris, having, symbolically, found the scattered remnants of His Body in different parts of the world and, in piecing them together again, made Osiris whole; that is to say, she had realised perfectly the Divine Immanence, seeing God as one Whole, undivided and indivisible, though present everywhere throughout the Universe. It is probable that she took on the office after it had been vacated by an earlier (Atlantean) Being; but whatever the succession of office it was Isis who answered the prayers of the Egyptians, presided over all functions of a feminine

² History of the Semites, Robertson-Smith, pp. 56-7.

nature and radiated Her loving power and wisdom upon all — thus becoming, as was said of the later Eve, 'the Mother of all living'. Her appearance was denoted by a blue and silver brilliancy which can be seen to this day by all who contact Her activities, even though She has now finished Her work as Representative of the World Mother and has passed onward to take up other work, of the nature of which we know nothing.

Her successor in office, the present Representative of the World Mother, is that Great Being who was known as Mary, the Mother of Jesus. She, like Isis, had linked Herself very definitely with what must, for want of a better term, be called the feminine aspect of God, becoming, through Her great love and knowledge (especially of the feminine principles in Nature) and Her great purity, the guardian of all Her sex, the Dispenser of the Love and Power of the Great Mother.

For all who listen attentively, in the hope of hearing God's Voice speak to them 'in the cool of the day', that is, in the innermost centre of their own nature when the heat of kama-manas (the mind ruled by the emotions) has subsided, this message of Our Lady's continued work for the world is peculiarly helpful and significant. There is, however, nothing new in the idea of a World Mother, new though it may be even to some members of the Theosophical Society. It was spoken of long ago in The Secret Doctrine by H.P. Blavatsky, who states that 'Isis was the mother and nourisher of man' and was considered as feminine and represented as a virgin woman by the Egyptian Initiates. It was the pure idea of mystic Nature that was personified in the 'World Virgins', the 'Celestial Maidens', and later on by the human Virgin, Mary, the Mother of the Saviour, the Salvator Mundi now chosen by the Christian world. And it was the character of the Jewish maiden that was adapted by Theology to archaic symbolism³. She also quotes Maury, who says that 'the Virgin took possession of all the Sanctuaries of Ceres and Venus, and that the Pagan rites,

³ Secret Doctrine part 3, p. 297

proclaimed and practised in honour of these Goddesses, were in a great measure transferred to the Mother of Christ' ⁴. The same writer shows elsewhere that the Virgin Mary took over all the attributes of Isis and continued Her work.

It is interesting to note these remarks in this connection, for there are a few students in the Society who make a distinction between what they call Neo-Theosophy and the teachings of The Secret Doctrine, forgetting that the later leaders of the Society were pupils of H.P. Blavatsky and that their teachings are all based upon those of The Secret Doctrine, being but enlarged snapshots of that very compact work. The promulgation of the Divine Wisdom is a gradual process, for each age has its especial need and humanity is not capable of understanding the whole fullness of Truth in any one age; hence the necessity for teachers who can understand and satisfy the need of the age by understanding and interpreting the teaching of the Masters as it is related thereto, as that teaching was given to H.P. Blavatsky and as it was and is given to Their other pupils.

It is not a question of 'Who said that?' but what is said that really matters. The later teachings do not contradict the old, although the need of these later days may, and does, necessitate that emphasis should be given to different aspects of that teaching. The student who seeks to become a pupil of the Master must become catholic in the correct sense of that much-abused word and must be sufficiently broad-minded to listen to all that is said and sufficiently stable to make his own decisions under the guidance of the Self within him. There is no need for him to be a blind follower, but neither need he, like Nelson, deliberately put the telescope to his blind eye and say 'I cannot see the signal'. He must know how to open himself up to truth and become a true Catholic-Eclectic, accepting all that is offered, and from the mass selecting the best, as far as his own development will permit. Lessons may be learned from a child as well as from a Master and as the One Light is in all it

⁴ Secret Doctrine part 1, p. 431

would be foolish to decide beforehand from which direction the light will shine to illumine the path of the aspirant. To *re-ceive, per-ceive and con-ceive* — this is the duty of the would-be disciple who seeks to become able to serve and to do the work which must be done for the defence and enlightenment of the world.

Rigidity of mind is the great enemy of all who would use their knowledge to help and not, to hinder. This rigidity has grown up in many of us in the Theosophical Society, but much help has been given to lessen it especially by the Liberal Catholic Church, and through the Coming of the World Teacher. Indeed, great help has also been received by many through the ceremonial worship of the Church and of Freemasonry, and there was always a need for this form of development, for the Theosophical Society has been perhaps too exclusively occupied with intellectual studies. Such studies are, of course, necessary, but they are not useful if pursued to the exclusion of the devotional side of the nature. The Liberal Catholic Church has helped many members of the Society, who, otherwise, would never have attended any form of worship, and their development has undoubtedly gone forward more rapidly than it would had they restricted their activities to attending or taking lectures and study groups. The way of approach to God, and hence to man, through ceremonial worship is a very real and sure one, and though there are a few to whom it does not appeal, it none the less offers a means of rapid advancement to the individual. The more intimate presence of the World Mother should also have a great effect upon all who are able to take advantage of it.

Geoffrey Hodson has told how, whilst making clairvoyant researches into pre-natal development, he first learnt for himself of the Madonna's work for the world. Whilst studying the pre-natal development of a human embryo he found that a *deva* was at work upon it and noticed that in the ninth month the aura of the *deva* underwent a remarkable change, appearing 'like a beautiful mantle of blue thrown over the head and shoulders, with one corner covering the mother and child. . . . The blue mantle . . . shone with a

silvery sheen, and as the head of the *deva* was bent down over his charges and his arms embraced them, the effect was irresistibly reminiscent of the Madonna and Child'.

This appearance as of a blue mantle covering the head and shoulders of all who are specially connected with the World Mother, appears not only during childbirth; it can also be seen over the heads of those devotees of Our Lady who, by reason of a strongly maternal nature or of strong attachment to Her, endeavour to channel Her blessing to others. The hue of the colour in the case of the Madonna is perhaps not quite that used by the Lady Isis, being of a darker, brilliantly electric shade of blue, of great depth and purity of colouring.

'There was such a deep tenderness, such a truly maternal spirit of love and joy and protection' expressed in the attitude of the *deva*, that Geoffrey Hodson set himself to discover its cause. Raising his consciousness to higher planes, he saw that the real source of the wonderful love and protection enwrapping the mother and child was:

'One so lovely, so truly embodying the spirit of Motherhood, as of womanhood, that I knew Her as none other than the Blessed Mother Herself. Radiant and beautiful is She beyond description. She shines with all the glory of divinity, yet Her 'form' is that of a fresh young girl: through the wondrous eyes there shines forth a glowing happiness, an almost ecstatic bliss which in spite of its exaltation and superhuman intensity is yet full of the happy laughter of children, strangely combined with the deep contentment of human maturity.'

So intimate and wonderful was Her overshadowing of the *deva*, and through the *deva* of the mother and child, that it seemed as if She Herself were actually present at the birth.

'So close does She come that She actually seems to share the pangs of birth as well as the joys of parenthood: indeed, I believe that She

actually unifies Herself with the womanhood of the world, suffering with them all their pain, even their shame and degradation, in order that She may more truly share with them Her own divine achievement, Her own wondrous power, Her all-embracing love.

'So I think does She experience with them all the joys of the first love, the fresh beauty of awakening womanhood, as well as the deep happiness of maturity and the joys of wife and mother. . . .

"This influence must increase the power, depth and beauty of the love of the maid for her man, give courage and endurance to the wife in the hours of her pain and trial and increase enormously the value to the ego of those great expansions of consciousness, those deep changes of soul which come to every woman in some degree when she passes into the valley of the shadow of death that a child may be born.

'She seeks ever the perfection as well of the individual as of the race and She works first through woman, seeking ever to exalt the sacredness of marriage and maternity, to restore to man the lost ideals of the deeply sacred nature of marriage and parenthood. She knows that thus a purer race will be born, a race that shall provide bodies ever more and more fit to be the temple of the indwelling God.'⁵

It is well that the student of Occultism should realise that although the act of child-birth is just a natural and in some ways even mechanical process, yet the experience gained by the mother is by no means so. No woman can pass through it without gaining some extension or expansion of consciousness, and no one who has borne a child should ever be able to lose the realisation of having thus expressed herself. Even though a normal experience, it is one which should, and nearly always does, give a newer and broader outlook upon life to all who pass through it.

⁵ The Herald of the Star, August 1926

This is the effect of the experience on the ordinary woman, an effect which must surely be greatly enhanced in the case of the woman who is an occult student and whose life is devoted to service. In her case, the awakening caused by the act of birth-giving must be far more pronounced; indeed it is probable that no woman can become a real occultist unless she has gained such an expansion of consciousness and gained it along this line. There are some, of course, to whom such an expansion of consciousness comes in other ways. A few have learned the lessons of Motherhood without having to pass through the pangs of labour. In any case, it is possible that no woman can attain to perfection unless she has, either mystically or actually, gained such an experience, and thus caused the Motherhood ideal to become firmly engrained within her. The suppression practised by so many women who give themselves up to religious and philosophical studies often leads to reaction of an unpleasant kind, to a peculiar introversion which shows upon their faces, whereas the woman who has learned to give expression to the holy forces of motherhood within her has gained a wonderful experience which, if she can hold on to it, will enable her to contact a breadth and depth of spiritual consciousness unknown to her before.

For those who have missed or have refused this particular mode of service, or have not yet realised the beauty of Motherhood, the present age offers a wonderful opportunity of realising it mystically by co-operating with the work of the World Mother. Those who feel drawn to such work will be enabled, through devotion to Her and by meditative union with Her, to become Her messengers to the world. And in Her service the woman who has suppressed her nature and become somewhat cold and rigid, a prey to fear of sex, may safely loosen her bonds, and in so doing become a Mother to the needy, and a warmly sympathetic friend to all.

It is unfortunate that Protestantism, which has done so much good in putting aside many of the exaggerated views of the Roman

Catholic Church, should have lost so much that is of very great value; for despite its inability to appreciate the maternal side of God and Nature, it is undoubtedly true that very wonderful help is given to the world by 'Our Lady', the World Mother. When it is remembered how many there are who need the loving care of a Mother who is the Mother of all mothers and Queen of Love and Sympathy, it will perhaps be realised how necessary is the help of such a Being. There is not a prayer for aid She does not answer in Her own way, not a Mother or child from whom She turns. Not that prayer is necessary to gain the help of One who takes as Her province the whole world of Womanhood and Childhood, and pours Her love unceasingly upon both. But prayer and meditation are both of use to the individual and She certainly answers whenever a call is sent to Her. Prayer of the cruder type cannot but be weakening, for it induces a tendency towards a lack of self-reliance; but there are nevertheless times in the lives of men and women when the need is felt for a deeper sympathy than that given by ordinary friends. This is especially so in the case of many women, even when they are highly evolved: for such do not always receive sympathy from their equals, indeed their difficulties are not often understood or are understood only by those too busy to notice the need for help. In such cases, prayer or, better still, meditation, is of great assistance, bringing the aspirant into direct contact with the Mother of mothers, and consciously into the orbit of Her unfailing love and blessing. Though concerned with a World Work, the World Mother answers each call that comes to Her, pouring true Love and sympathy and strength upon all who need it, giving to women a strength which they do not ordinarily possess, however highly evolved they may be. She does not condemn the so-called fallen ones. Her rich sympathy being as truly with the lowest prostitute as with the highest Lady in the land.

It is certainly a matter for regret that the western world has almost lost the knowledge of the maternal side of Nature as so marvellously represented by the World Mother. In the East today She is as well-known as she was in all ancient religions. No one

would accuse the devout Hindu of ‘going over to Rome’ because he sees both sides of Nature and of God and consequently reverences the ‘Shakti’, or feminine aspect of the Creator, as well as the Creator Himself. The difficulty in the West is caused by the fact that, although Christians hail Christ as Divine, they fear to acknowledge the divinity of the human being because this would entail the recognition that the realisation of God is as possible to the woman as to the man. But nothing could be more illogical than the assumption that whereas the Divine Life in Christ was fully and perfectly realised, in His own Mother it could not be so because she was a woman.

There are some who say, with regard to this, ‘Worship God alone’, forgetting that God manifests Himself to man in various ways, His Life being everywhere and in everything, and that when a Being has become perfect then in that Being the Light of God will shine brightly, and be of inestimable service to all, whether that being uses a male or a female body. We have to learn to reverence true greatness and to look for it in all, for by so doing we acknowledge the presence of God in His Universe and in humanity. It is not that we offer to man the worship that should be given to God, but that in reverencing all we worship the Divinity in them, and through them pay homage to the One from whom all came. As the ancient Sanskrit writer puts it, ‘not for the husband is the husband loved but for the divinity in the husband is the husband loved; not for the mother is the mother loved but for the divine life in her is she loved’.

It is probable that the western world will learn to appreciate this idea of the World Mother when it is better understood. The few thousands who already accept it will, by reason of their quiet enthusiasm and deep conviction, cause the knowledge of it to spread over the world, so that in time the great majority will also accept it and be helped accordingly; and as this is the age of woman’s emancipation and the male is slowly losing his self-assumed domination, it is probable that women will have much to do in opening human hearts and minds to the influence of the

Great Mother. Though acceptable, in a general sense, to the devout Roman and Anglo Catholic, the idea as it is presented by the Theosophist is so much more catholic and far-reaching that it will probably only be accepted in this broad meaning by those who are in sympathy with all religions, seeing each as a distinctive and necessary note in a great chord of Religion.

It is interesting to note that, long before Dr. Annie Besant had entered the Theosophical Society, the matter of the World Mother had been dealt with in the pages of Madame Blavatsky's own journal, Lucifer (Jan., 1880). In an article, 'A Vision produced by Music' (since reprinted in the June 1928 Theosophist), a contributor speaks of the vision which came to her as a celebrated artiste was singing an *Ave Maria* and Liszt's *Saint Elizabeth's Prayer*. In a side chapel the writer saw the Virgin slowly ascending and gradually becoming transfigured, so that 'the radiance and the glory were too bright for my eyes. . . . I heard a voice as from heaven say: 'Be comforted, lone heart, I ascend now but only to descend again; wait with patience'.

The symbols of Man Crucified on earth were next shown her and a voice was heard explaining that he would remain 'crucified until Mary comes back again The partition between the two worlds can never be removed until Mary descends again into the living human heart, annulling its division and bringing to each the divine counterpart of which Maria is the eternal symbol. When She comes again — and I say the time is not long — the Crucifixion of Man shall be ended. . . . Maria comes soon again to each and all, and there shall be no more sorrow or sighing in the Whole City of God. Pray then that She may come soon, for the earth is weary of Her absence.'

Dr. Besant, writing in The Theosophist, June, 1928, affirms that the World Mother spoke to her directly, asking her to announce Her coming, to announce to the world the coming of the Divine Compassion in its female aspect. She says: 'When the World Mother spoke to me of our blessed Lord now in the world, it was a

glad surprise, and linked together as with golden clasps, the Kingdom of Happiness proclaimed by our Krishnaji, and the all-embracing Compassion of the Divine Motherhood. Slowly will come this complementary work, calmly, serenely, the revelation of the true place of Woman in the coming civilisation, not as the rival of man, but as his comrade, his friend.'

After she had received from the World Mother this assurance of Her coming closer to humanity, Dr. Besant gave a most wonderful sermon at Adyar in the course of which she stated that the 'World Mother stands out as the representative of Womanhood, in its highest function, the function of Mother. Now Motherhood as a national vocation has not been recognised to the full in the West; and it is a little strange that in the Constitution of the German Republic we meet for the first time the definite recognition of Motherhood and of the duty of the Nation to the mothers of the Nation. That is to be one of the notes of the future, and the great movement of recognition of that is to begin here. For all the great religious movements have come forth from the East. . . . It is at this time, in connection with the same forward movement of civilisation, that the World Mother, — known by different names in different faiths, is coming forward to take Her special place as the Mother of the World, recognised publicly, as She has ever been active spiritually. Hers is the tender mercy that presides at the birth of every child, whatever the rank or place of the mother. The sacredness of Motherhood brings beside the bed of suffering, Her compassion and Her tenderness. Her all-embracing Motherhood knows no differences of caste, colour, rank. All, to Her, are Her children; the tenderest of all human movements, and, because the most compassionate, the greatest power in the civilisation.'

But although Dr. Besant was told by the World Mother Herself to proclaim Her advent it is not, as she acknowledges, she herself who is to lead the movement. 'It will be', she says, 'Rukmini Arundale. It was for that she was chosen, that she was cared for through her (as yet) short life on earth. It is she who is chosen by the World Mother to spread through India and the world this

recognition, which partly has been overlooked by western thought, of the sanctity, the greatness of Motherhood in all its varied aspects. And it is well that such a movement should be led by an Indian woman, chosen for this splendid work. . . . Wide as the world, it will be. Great as the Divine Power, it will be. The West is ready for it, for it recognises the power of woman, and the corrective that is needed is that woman is not man's rival but the other side of God: that marriage is a holy sacrament, the great union of the Divine Nature by which Humanity is created and evolved And this great movement for co-operating with the work of the World Teacher will be the feminine side of the work for the uplift of Humanity. I count it as the greatest privilege of my life to have announced and prepared for the coming of the World Teacher. And that is crowned when I am bidden today to announce the complementary movement, the movement of Motherhood, which will appeal I believe, to the hearts of the Nations, whether they belong to the East or the West. . . .

'There is a great Spiritual Being who represents the feminine side of Divinity in a concrete form — the Ideal Womanhood, as the Ideal Manhood is represented by the World Teacher. . . . The Hindus have always regarded the Emanator of the Uni-verse and His products as of His own dual nature; every divine manifestation is dual, masculine and feminine. . . In the feminist movement of the West the idea of God as Father-Mother has been re-born; the Catholic-Christian concept of the Madonna has instinctively preserved the Ideal Womanhood - 'Our Lady'.

'The time being ripe, this Great Being, whose function is clearly indicated by the title She bears of 'World Mother', has deigned to give to Her world the following 'Call', transmitted through the inevitably imperfect channel of a pupil living in the outer world. Now the difficulty of translating messages from the higher planes of consciousness into physical plane words is that above the mental plane, images are used, not words. The words convey the images or thought, but these vary with the mental vocabulary of the translator. The substance of the thought is conveyed, but the

words may be bolder or more ornate, according to the artistic or emotional habit of the translator. Unless this be understood, many difficulties arise; it is peculiarly true in this region that 'the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life'.

But why, it may be asked, should an Indian woman be chosen to represent the World Mother? But it is just because she is an Indian woman that she has been chosen. As Dr. Besant says, 'only in India can be found the pure unmixed descent of Aryan blood for thousands of years, marked by the wonderful delicacy of the physical body, the utter purity and impersonality of the emotional nature and the subjection of the mind to the intuition'. (The Theosophist, June, 1928.) All those who know Mrs. Arundale will acknowledge that this is a most fitting description of her and will feel with Dr. Besant that she 'is worthy of her great mission in the world.'

Thus there comes through Dr. Besant and Mrs. Rukmini Arundale, the assurance that this wonderful Being intends to bring Herself into yet closer contact with the human race, to the end that woman, so long the physical chattel, the emotional plaything of man, may realise to the full the great opportunity that is hers for helping in the upliftment of the race and for the fulfilment of her own divine destiny as woman — in her holy love, in her sacred ability for motherhood. So the World Mother gives Her 'Call'.

'Do you know how glorious is Motherhood? In every kingdom of nature the period of Motherhood is sublime, for the fiercest of creatures becomes infinitely tender, the most selfish full of sacrifice, the weakest mighty in self-forgetful protection. Such is the transmuting power of Motherhood, which lifts the lowest creature for the time into the splendour of its Divinity. Even the very physical body itself glows with faint consciousness of the Immanence of the Mother-Life Universal; and to those in whom the ineffable mystery of Motherhood dwells is opened a marvellous vision of the glory of the creative power of Life, of that which is the sublime and glorious wonder of Divinity. What is more wonderful

than Motherhood, for Motherhood is the supreme Act of God, with perfect reflection in every living Spark of His Life . . .

'In the home, the Motherhood of woman has supreme place and has been honoured from time immemorial, though false tradition and blasphemous custom have brought to her shameful dishonour in many evil practices, thus dethroning her from her rightful place, and bringing degradation both to the home and to the race. I call upon those who follow Me to restore her to her throne in the heart of the home, and to free her to be its glory and its most precious jewel. In the outer world no less must woman have her honoured place, for the Nation needs her as a perfect example of the power and sacrifice of citizenship, purifying and ennobling its life, and by the Purity of her Shakti ⁶ burning away the dross of selfishness and unbrotherliness. Every woman must be a Star in the home and in the life of the Motherland, 'shining more and more into the Perfect Day'. Where women are honoured and fulfil their womanhood, there shall reign peace and prosperity. Then shall the young be happy in the joy and gladness of youth. Then shall the elders work as comrades in the service of the land . . . each contributing to the common stock the special richness of his individual faith and circumstance. Then shall the aged bless and fructify with their wisdom, and depart into their Peace honoured and rejoicing. Come unto Me, My children, that these things may be, that in the Presence of our Glorious Lord the world may enter into the Kingdom prepared for it.

'Who will help Me to be to My world as I would wish to be? Who will help to give to women their rightful place in life? . . . Who will reverence them as mothers should be reverenced, be they mothers of children, or mothers of the sorrowful, and of all who are in need.

...

'What more splendid work for man than to help woman reverently to achieve the sublimity of her womanhood? What more splendid

⁶ The in-dwelling Power of God in her.

work for woman than to perform the sacrament of Motherhood either own person, or in the service of a world all too motherless. Shall not every woman be a mother, either to her own children or to My other children, to those who are starving for want of Motherhood? If every woman were active in My service, and if womanhood were honoured, all wretchedness, all misery, all loneliness, all despair, would disappear, for there is no room for these where Motherhood abides in strength and tenderness.

'Our Blessed Lord bids you enter into the world of Happiness.... As He comes to the world, so come I. But My call is to the womanhood of the world and to those who honour womanhood; for if the word of the Lord is heeded by the woman, the world is sure of its salvation. Therefore do I call upon the women of the world, members of My kingdom. My special care and in whom I dwell, to manifest Me to the world, to spread My Motherhood everywhere, so that Motherhood may be reverenced as God's most precious gift.'⁷

It was said long ago by a Master of the Wisdom that when woman took her rightful place she would bear Buddhas and Christs. Yet not of herself can she do this. For, just as 'Motherhood is the fulfilment of life, the flowering of Divinity, at every stage of its unfoldment' in a woman, so is Fatherhood, when rightly understood, the flowering of the Divinity expressing itself through men. Parenthood in its highest aspect can only manifest when men as well as women understand aright the sacred nature of that holy office. No woman can 'go down into the valley of the shadow to bring forth a child' without realising an expansion and upliftment of consciousness, even if she goes *alone*; but no woman can go down into it, secure in the Realisation of her husband's intimate understanding, wrapped round, body and soul, by 'the guardian wall of her husband's love' — in the *real* sense, taking him with her — without touching such heights of bliss, such holy deeps of spiritual consciousness, that through her the consciousness of her

⁷ The World Mother, May, 1928

child, her husband and the race are permanently enriched. No children in the world excel in beauty and equilibrium those born of a deep and holy love. And birth under such conditions, permanently deepening and enriching the consciousness, not only builds into the woman a deeper and more abiding love for her man, but builds into father, mother and child the capacity to understand more fully, especially through 'the wisdom of the heart', the mysteries of life, so enabling them to become more truly 'all things to all' whom they contact.

It is only as the sexes rise to mutual understanding of and reverence for the holy qualities and capacities of both that the Path of Perfection can be trodden by either of them. Isolate the two in sympathy and understanding, even in aspiration towards the Path, and both remain spiritually at a standstill. Only in the recognition of their mutual interdependence will they attain the completion of their being. Only through an ever-growing understanding of and reverence for each other can the new Race be born.

It is for this reason that the appeal of the World Mother applies as much to men as to women. Deep within every woman, in her early years at least, is a consciousness of the holy nature of the work entrusted to her as a woman. How long can such a feeling survive before the present attitude of humanity in general and men in particular? Yet in the interests of the Race it *must* survive, and must dominate the consciousness of both men and women. And it is for the bringing about of a real understanding of the matter that the power of Our Lady is focussed upon the world. For it is only as this understanding dominates the minds of men and women that they will be capable of raising Parenthood to the level necessary for the birth of those advanced souls awaiting incarnation in the new Race about to come into being.

Hence the call of the World Mother is not destined for women only. True, it is through the recognition of her holy capacity for Motherhood and in her coming great work for the upliftment of the weak and helpless, that much of the work must be done — by her,

for herself; but such recognition will fail of its highest fulfilment if it comes to her alone, if men do not rise with her and help her attain — what they also must attain — the right, because highest, use of all inner and outer forces.

To those who realise their responsibility to unborn generations, this call of the World Mother comes as a benediction — opening the path to more speedy realisation of the higher methods of service, the expanding and enrichment of all they have to give, all they can do. Such know that in this call of the Mother of the World there is release — release *from* out-grown phases of consciousness, release *into* the higher phases of being within themselves.

In the light of all this, would it not be well if every female Theosophist who is able to accept the great Idea of the World Mother would endeavour to make the Presence of Our Lady as much manifest as is now that of Her Lord? As a means to that end the writer would suggest that all who can should devote a few moments each morning and evening to a brief meditation upon Our Lady and Her Work and thereby endeavour to make themselves agents, not merely negative channels but active messengers to the world to bring about the changes She desires, to develop Purity, Devotion and Self-sacrifice as well as the truest Sympathy and the greatest Love and Compassion. It would not be at all difficult for anyone who is accustomed to meditation or prayer to enter into very definite relation with the World Mother in this way; and the more there are who undertake the work the greater will be the volume of glorious Beauty, Peace, Love and Harmony She will be able to give to the world. Although the Theosophical Society cannot be committed as a whole to this belief, much can be done by individual Theosophists to help the world along these lines. A great peaceful, healing power, unlike any other, will stream from the World Mother through all who put themselves in meditative touch with Her, and will enrich and uplift all who contact it. A continuous and definite stream of blessing would thus be ever at the service of the world.

It is perhaps peculiarly woman's work. Let all such welcome Her into their homes, making therein a little corner shrine where-on to keep a picture of Our Lady, and at which to meditate for a few moments each morning and evening. This endeavour to get in touch with the World Mother through Her picture would quickly bring the aspirant into rapport with Her and she could then think of all those who need help and send to them the healing forces poured out by Our Lady. In this work of healing, it is perhaps more efficacious to pronounce the Name by which She is known to the devotee, and to affirm, as each person is being helped, 'In the Name of Our Lady, Maria-Isis, and in the Name of Her Lord and Son, I send you Peace, Health and Happiness'. This is of course only one formula amongst the many that might well be used; but each individual will be able to find his or her own way of approach and his or her own method of channelling the healing force, provided that the proper rapport is made and the true intent be there.

Such a method will do much to raise the consciousness and stimulate spiritual growth, and the time will come when this — added to the daily endeavour to channel Her blessing to the world — will bring home to each aspirant the knowledge that they have made a direct link with Her, and that so long as they remain faithful Her power will flow through them for the blessing of the world.